



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI

GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE  
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April 26, 2007

Dear Members of the Sears Island Planning Initiative:

When your Steering Committee began its work last spring I told you that I supported the stakeholder process, and expected that "in the best tradition of Maine people, you will work in good faith to produce a consensus set of recommendations by the end of this year."

While your diligent work has perhaps taken longer than you hoped, your dialogue in defining appropriate use of Sears Island is on the verge of leading to an agreement. I have reviewed the drafts of March 27 and April 12. To me, they create a framework within which we can meet the dual interests I had in mind when my Administration began this process: To promote Maine's "quality of place" by enhancing opportunities for eco-tourism, and to meet Maine's urgent need for modern transportation infrastructure.

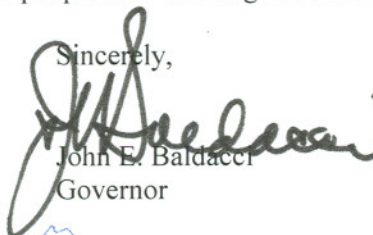
Having spent much of my adult life in public service, I know firsthand that agreements on issues about which people feel most passionate are often hard to reach. They sometimes require that parties agree to concepts that they would not voluntarily choose. In this case, as you enter your final deliberations, I urge you to bear in mind the paramount interests that a vital economy and a quality environment mean for Maine.

Sears Island has been a subject of controversy for as long as I can remember. While there have been temporary alliances along the way, the last 30 years have most often been characterized by polarized, hostile rhetoric. There is sometimes an element of risk in moving together from the "safety" of those historic, divisive positions into a new future in which the long range outcome is not completely clear. Here, you have the opportunity to provide leadership, to change that history, and to realize your dreams for this precious jewel off the coast of Maine.

As your work together draws to a close, I urge you to redouble your efforts to forge an agreement which provides policy makers, state and regional businesspeople, and local citizens clear guidance about how Sears Island will and will not be used in the future. I remain confident that you can achieve this goal.

I know that many of you have made substantial personal and economic sacrifices to participate in this process. You have attended nine Steering Committee meetings and countless other meetings during the last year. For all those efforts, you deserve the thanks of my administration, our Legislature, and of Maine people now and in generations to come.

Sincerely,



John E. Baldacci  
Governor



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